

**MINUTES OF THE  
NATURAL RESOURCES APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE  
February 6, 2008  
Room W130, West Office, Building, State Capitol Complex**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Sen. Dennis Stowell, Co-Chair  
Rep. Ben Ferry, Co-Chair  
Sen. Margaret Dayton  
Rep. Roger Barrus  
Rep. Jack Draxler  
Rep. Carl Duckworth  
Rep. Kerry W. Gibson  
Rep. James R. Gowans  
Rep. John G. Mathis  
Rep. Michael E. Noel  
Rep. Steve Sandstrom

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Sen. Mike Dmitrich  
Sen. John Valentine

**STAFF:** Ivan Djambov, Fiscal Analyst  
Linda Service, Committee Secretary

**Note:** A list of visitors and a copy of handouts are filed with the committee minutes.

Rep. Ferry called the meeting to order at 2:15 p.m.

**School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration:** Analyst Presentation

Ivan Djambov, Fiscal Analyst, presented the Budget Brief - School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration and introduced two new documents to include in the Budget Analysis binder. SITLA was established as a quasi-governmental independent state agency in 1994 to manage all school and institutional trust lands and associated assets. Part of the generated revenue is used for SITLA's capital and operating expenses and the rest is deposited into the Permanent School Fund.

SITLA is requesting an ongoing appropriation of \$98,900 from the Land Grant Management fund for FY 2009 for an attorney who can provide support to local law enforcement officials, county attorneys general, and assist in the prosecution of crimes committed against trust land assets. The Analyst recommends the Subcommittee fund the request.

SITLA is requesting funding to hire a temporary Resource Specialist to help with the RS 2477 process. The Analyst recommends the Subcommittee provide for FY 2008 a supplemental appropriation of \$17,300 and for FY 2009 a one-time appropriation of \$46,400.

The workload for the Surface group has increased in recent years. The agency is requesting funding for a Resource Specialist who will be responsible for the lease compliance throughout the state, ensuring that all leases and other uses of trust lands do not degrade the land or compromise the ability to use the lands and receive revenues from them. The Analyst recommends the Subcommittee provide for FY 2009 an

ongoing appropriation of \$88,900 to hire a Resource Specialist. The Analyst recommends a one-time appropriation of \$31,000 for purchasing a vehicle since the new employee will be traveling extensively and an ongoing appropriation of \$7,000 for the vehicle's operating/depreciation costs.

The Planning and Development agency is requesting for FY 2009 an ongoing appropriation of \$82,300 for hiring a Research Analyst since it becomes more important to maintain accountability and look for ways to become more effective. The Fiscal Analyst recommends the Subcommittee fund this request.

The first phase of the development of the project account system is complete. The next phase is to make the information available for staff to use for day to day management of the projects. The Analyst recommends the subcommittee provide for FY 2008 a supplemental appropriation of \$50,000.

SITLA is requesting funding as a supplemental appropriation for FY2008 to cover costs to switch to a new web provider in the amount of \$34,000. SITLA is also requesting \$100,000 for creating and implementing electronic forms. The Analyst recommends the Subcommittee fund these requests.

The agency is requesting funding for capital development in a supplemental appropriation of \$1,350,000 for FY 2008 and a one-time appropriation of \$7,700,000 for FY 2009. The Analyst recommends the Subcommittee provide the funding.

The 2005 Legislature provided \$200,00 ongoing appropriation to be used by SITLA for appraisals and technical support in preparation for land exchanges with the federal government. Because the process authorizing the land exchanges has been slow, this funding was not fully utilized in the past two years. The Analyst recommends the Subcommittee authorize the agency to use a one-time \$98,000 from this ongoing source to pay for remodeling expenses in FY 2008.

SITLA has requested funding for IT needs with a supplemental appropriation for FY 2008 of \$99,000 and for FY 2009 an ongoing appropriation of \$121,000

Sen. Dayton assumed the chair.

#### Agency Presentation

Kevin Carter, Director of SITLA, accompanied by John Ferry, Vice Chair, summarized budget requests which include capital investment, information technology upgrades, auditing contract funds, and office remodel for supplemental funds and FY 2009 requests. He responded to questions and concerns from committee members.

#### **Snake Valley Funding:** Analyst Presentation

The Analyst distributed the Issue Brief - Snake Valley Funding. During the 2007 General Session, the Legislature responded to the need to ensure proper monitoring of the water sources in the West Desert by providing funding for the Ground-Water Monitoring plan as presented by UGS. The original total cost of the plan was \$2,000,000. The Legislature provided UGS with a one-time appropriation of \$1,400,000 from the General Fund for FY 2008, and 7.5 percent of the revenues coming into the Land Exchange Distribution Account for FY 2008 and FY 2009. In FY 2008 UGS is using the General Funds to start the project, however the funding from the Land Exchange Distribution Account was not appropriated to the

Division and revenues have been accumulating in the restricted account. The appropriation will be made during the 2008 General Session and the agency will receive all of the funding appropriated. Meanwhile, the actual and the projected revenues from this funding source ended up being more than five times higher than originally projected.

Based on the current projections of the restricted account, along with the \$1.4 million from the General Funds, the total funding available for the project will be \$4.5 million, more than two times the originally requested amount. The Analyst recommends the Legislature consider using \$1.5 million of the additional \$2.5 million to augment the original Ground-Water Monitoring plan for the Snake Valley and reallocate \$1 million of General Funds from UGS to the Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands for reseeding projects.

#### Presentation of the Ibapah Elementary School

Marilyn Linares and Charlene Pete, teachers at the Ibapah Elementary School, along with 13 of their students, presented a request to the committee to fund the Ground-Water Monitoring plan for the Snake Valley. Dustin Murphy, Wendell Openheimer, and Dallen Batement read letters they had prepared asking for support.

#### **UGS Presentation of Snake Valley**

Rick Allis, Director of the Utah Geological Survey, gave an overview of three scenarios for the three-year project monitoring springs and seeps in the Snake Valley. He responded to questions from the committee. John Cooper, Millard County Commissioner, Dean Baker and Cecil Garland from Snake Valley, spoke to the threat of the pipeline and the need of the monitoring project. They asked for support to fund the project.

Sen. Stowell assumed the chair.

#### **Request for Funding:** Sen. Peterson

Sen. Peterson urged support of the committee for the proposed ground-water monitor wells.

MOTION: Rep. Gibson moved to adopt the minutes of January 30, 2008 and January 31, 2008 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands:** Analyst Presentation

The Analyst presented the Budget Brief - Forestry, Fire and State Lands. The Division manages the state's sovereign lands and provides forestry conservation and fire control activities on non-federal forest, range, and watershed lands.

Funding in the Fire Suppression Program is not sufficient to cover the projected fire suppression costs for the 2007 season. The Analyst recommends the Subcommittee place on its priority list for FY 2008 as request for supplemental appropriation of \$5,000,000 from the General Fund.

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Due to the backlog of permits, expired easements, and commercial applications, the Division is requesting for FY 2009 an \$80,000 ongoing appropriation from the restricted account to hire a Mineral Specialist. the Analyst recommends the Subcommittee fund this request.

The Program provides two internship positions for students enrolled in natural resource related programs. The Program began in FY 2007 and was funded with two one-time appropriations of \$62,000 and \$65,000 from the restricted account. The Analyst recommends the Subcommittee provide for FY 2009 an ongoing appropriation of \$70,000 from the Sovereign Lands Management restricted account.

The Great Salt Lake Comprehensive Management Plan identified areas that need continued monitoring and research. The Division is requesting for FY 2009 an ongoing appropriation of \$250,000 from the restricted account. The Analyst recommends the Subcommittee fund this request.

The Division is requesting for FY 2009 a one-time appropriation of \$15,000 for the re-location costs of the Wasatch Front area office and an ongoing appropriation of \$60,000 for rent from the restricted account. The Analyst recommends the Subcommittee fund this request.

The Division is moving the Heber City satellite office and now has to pay for the leased office space. The Analyst is recommending the Subcommittee provide for FY 2009 an ongoing appropriation of \$24,000 from the restricted account for a new lease.

The Richfield area office will be moved to new office space. The Analyst recommends the Subcommittee appropriate for FY 2009 an ongoing \$30,000 from the restricted account to cover costs of the new office space.

The Division is requesting for FY 2009 \$20,000 one-time appropriation for the building of a new data base system and \$5,000 ongoing for the hosting and maintenance of the system. The Analyst recommends the Subcommittee fund these requests.

#### Agency Presentation

Dick Buehler, Director of the Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands, discussed budget concerns: 1) reconsider the additional \$1,000,000 requested in the original budget request for a total of \$6,000,000 for fire suppression; and 2) the one FTE for a fire management officer.

#### **Analyst Presentation:** Ivan Djambov

The Analyst summarized handout requests for non-General Funds increases.

#### **Arial Photography:** Charles Kay

Dr. Charles Kay, Institute of Political Economy, Utah State University, presented a proposal to conduct a three-year repeat-photo study in the Henry Mountains and Surrounding Area to document long-term changes in vegetation and erosion. He responded to questions by committee members.

Senator Dayton assumed the chair.

**Request for Funding:** Rep. Barrus

Rep. Barrus presented a request to appropriate funds for 1st Sub H.B. 58 - Severance Tax Amendments. He discussed a flow chart which shows the distribution of oil and gas and mining severance tax funds. The hope is to improve infrastructure and economic diversification.

**High School Rodeo Presentation:** Clay Christensen

Utah High School Rodeo Association was established to promote the development of education, sportsmanship, horsemanship and character in youth. He requested an appropriation increase of an additional \$10,000 for a total of \$20,000. The funds would be used for national travel. Mr. Christensen further answered questions from committee members.

**Request for Funding:** Rep. Gibson

Rep. Gibson spoke on behalf of the Utah Jr. Livestock Association which is a youth organization focusing on teaching youth how to handle, take care of, and be good stewards of animals. The Association is requesting on going funding to continue their efforts in this regard.

MOTION: Rep. Gibson motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

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Rep. Ben Ferry, Co-Chairman

Sen. Dennis Stowell, Co-Chairman